

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA  
MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** April 20, 2004

**TO:** Members of the Bar of the Northern District of West Virginia

**FROM:** Irene M. Keeley, Chief United States District Judge

**SUBJECT: Case Management/Electronic Case Files Implementation**

You may already be aware of our court's implementation plan for the Judiciary's new Case Management/Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF) system. We began the ten month long transition process in January and anticipate completion in November of this year. I would like to take a moment to personally bring you up-to-date on our progress thus far.

First, CM/ECF contains positive changes for both the court and attorneys practicing before the federal bench. For the court, the system will allow us to more easily manage our cases with 21<sup>st</sup> century technology. For attorneys, it introduces the ability to file and serve pleadings using the advanced speed and convenience of the internet. It also allows interested parties, including attorneys, to view the entire case file conveniently at any time from the comfort of home or office. All of you will be invited to participate in "brown-bag lunches" at the four places of holding court in the district this summer for an introduction to this powerful system. We are working with the State Bar to obtain CLE credit for attendance at this session.

We have updated our web site with a CM/ECF page. Log on to [www.wvnd.uscourts.gov](http://www.wvnd.uscourts.gov) and follow the links to the CM/ECF page. You will find some introductory materials there now. We will be adding to the page as new material becomes available. Take time to browse the various links. There is training material available in the form of a streaming video, a power point presentation and some computer based training sessions. Later this year, after we have had time to customize the system for the Northern District, there will be a tutorial available as well. There is also a section of frequently asked questions and one covering equipment requirements. You need to begin now preparing your office for electronic filing and the equipment list will speed you along your way.

What might this mean for you as a practicing attorney? First the benefits. CM/ECF will certainly eliminate a lot of printing in your office since pleadings are filed electronically with the court. If you are clever with electronic file storage, it will eliminate a lot of your paper files since all pleadings will be available to you electronically. In most cases, it also will release you from traditional service, save the complaint and summons. You will be able to electronically deliver and file your pleadings with the court without ever leaving your office. Unless specifically directed by the court, you will be able to file your motions, responses, replies, or any other document any time of the day or night, seven days a week. No more rushing to finish something so you can race down

to the Clerk's office before 5:00 p.m. This should save considerable time, money and aggravation on your part.

Our court intends to begin electronic filing the first of next year. There is still a lot of work to do so that date is a planning target. We are "task-driven" not "time-driven" in order to make sure we provide you with the best possible product. The advent of electronic filing no doubt will mean some changes in your personal lives. You will have to ensure you have internet connectivity, an e-mail account, appropriate hardware and software. As well, you will have to train your staff. I know this is inconvenient in the short term, but I am confident you will truly appreciate the benefits of the system once you begin using it.

As a precursor to implementation, I need to ask you to register with the Clerk. You will find a copy of the registration form under the **Registration** button on the court's CM/ECF internet page ( <http://racerweb.wvnd.uscourts.gov/> ) Please fill in the form, print it out and then send it in to the address indicated by May 14th. The Clerk will issue you a user ID and password electronically via e-mail using the information you provide. You might consider making sure your staff also have e-mail addresses as well since one of the real benefits of the system is that it allows delivery of process to multiple addresses. You will discover more about that feature on the web site.

Our Chief Deputy Clerk, Danny Armstrong, is the implementation director. If you have questions, call him in Clarksburg at 304-622-8565, or you can e-mail him at [danny\\_armstrong@wvnd.uscourts.gov](mailto:danny_armstrong@wvnd.uscourts.gov).

Sincerely,

/s/ Irene M. Keeley  
Chief United States District Judge